

**LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF AGING ORGANIZATIONS  
SOLUTIONS FORUM  
MAY 17, 2005**

**OLDER WORKERS**

**Whereas** in 2008, the first “baby boomers” will be eligible for early retirement benefits under Social Security:

**Whereas** in 2000, workers aged 55 and over accounted for 13 percent of the workforce. By 2012 they will account for 19 percent of the workforce. Over the same time period, workers 25 to 54 are expected to decline as a percentage of the workforce, from 71 percent in 2000 to 66 percent in 2012;

**Whereas** many “baby boomers” say that they want or need to work in retirement and employers are likely to need them in light of slow labor force growth;

**Whereas** workers of all ages must have the skills employers need to remain competitive in the global economy;

**Whereas** no one should be denied a job, laid-off or passed over for opportunities because of their age and individual workers should be judged on the basis of their individual competency, ability and physical condition in relation to the requirements of the job;

**Whereas** by 2008 there will be 6.7 million persons aged 55 and over below poverty, a 22 percent increase from 2000;

**Whereas** low-income older Americans, particularly those in rural areas, face multiple barriers to employment, including limited job options, limited training options, isolation and scarce transportation;

**Therefore, Be It Resolved** by the 2005 White House Conference on Aging to support policies that:

- Expand job opportunities and incentives to foster longer work lives for mature workers who wish or need to remain in the workforce;
- Remove barriers older workers face when seeking and retaining employment. Such barriers can include employer attitudes about older workers’ productivity; job modification and workplace redesign;
- Strengthen Federal and state age discrimination laws and increase workers’ awareness of their employment rights;

- Create and expand incentives to help workers who choose to postpone retirement or return to the workforce. Such incentives could include more attractive and flexible work options; phased retirement; job sharing; flex-place, part-year and other non-traditional work schedules; retiree rehire programs and support for older workers who want to become self-employed;
- Repeal state laws that reduce Unemployment Insurance benefits for displaced older workers who receive Social Security or pension benefits and that discriminate against people working part-time or seeking part-time work;
- Expand and adequately fund training, retraining and life-long learning programs.
- Expand funding for Title V of the OAA to serve older Americans who are economically disadvantaged, have significant barriers to employment and need intensive services and continue its focus on providing community service, as well as employment and training opportunities for low-income older persons;
- Re-establish targeted funding through the larger workforce system (currently WIA) to serve older Americans through a mainstreamed approach and to focus on increasing their skills to meet the demands of the labor market and be more competitive in the workforce;
- Ensure that older individuals are served by local, state and Federal employment and training programs at least in proportion to their numbers in the population;